



# IOWAccess Project Concept Paper

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1. **Email completed copy to the IOWAccess Manager: [malcolm.huston@iowa.gov](mailto:malcolm.huston@iowa.gov) .**
  2. **Send signed hard copy to Malcolm Huston, IOWAccess Manager, DAS-ITE, Hoover B Level, Des Moines, IA, 50319-0150.**
  3. **Contact ITE or vendor to prepare for project.**
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**Date:** 6/25/2009

**Project Name:** Iowa Code and Rules Easy Navigation and Search

**Requesting Agency:** Legislative Services Agency (LSA)  
State Capitol  
Des Moines, IA 50319

**Is this project in support of a program designated as an Iowa Great Place, pursuant to section 303.3c?** No

**Project Point(s)-of-Contact (include name and phone number):**

Jeff VanEngelenhoven & Richard Johnson  
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Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
515.281.3566

**Project Sponsor (include name and phone number):**

Iowa Code Office, LSA  
Iowa Administrative Code Office, LSA

**Business Case Justification:**

The Iowa Legislative Services Agency (LSA) is a non-partisan agency that organizes, updates, and publishes the Iowa Code and the Iowa Administrative Code. The Iowa Code is the official collection of Iowa's permanent laws. The Iowa Administrative Code is a composite of all rules written by the executive branch which have the full force and effect of law. The Iowa Administrative Code contains rules that have been adopted by the state agencies to implement, interpret, or make specific the law enforced or administered by the agencies.

The LSA is currently engaged in a multiyear computerization project to consolidate multiple publication platforms into one database publishing and management platform using standardized software. This project includes replacing the current legacy systems used for the production of bills, amendments, the Iowa Code, and the Iowa Administrative Code. The project is in the third year with the production release of all phases to be complete by March 2010.

The major change has been the implementation of a standardized content markup language (XML) across all critical databases. This has been key to enhancing both the integration and extensibility of the new platform and software system.

The development focus has been on document creation, the internal business process, and workflow. The LSA will now begin the development of the publicly accessible tools that will improve citizen access and understanding of Iowa law.

Currently users of the Iowa Code and the Iowa Administrative Code face two issues that would be addressed by this project:

- The Iowa Administrative Code rules which are implementing the statutes in the Iowa Code are paper-based, sometimes inaccurate in terms of referencing the Iowa Code, and hard to access.
- The current index taxonomy of the Iowa Code and the Iowa Administrative Code is not uniform, the indices are designed for paper-based delivery, and, at times, the publication of the indices occurs significantly later than the updated versions of the law.

### **Expected Results in this Project:**

The expected result of this project would be to improve citizen access to and understanding of the relationship of the Iowa Administrative Rules and the Iowa Code. This would be accomplished by refining and exposing their relationship. Many citizens are not clear of the difference or relationship between the Iowa Administrative Rules and the Iowa Code. The project will result in an easy to use navigation and search across the Iowa Code and the Iowa Administrative Code.

There currently is a paper-based table that lists which rules are implementing the Iowa Code. Unfortunately the current system is not very accurate. The Iowa Code is changed every year. Sections are added and deleted and provisions are renumbered. The Administrative Code contains 18,000 pages that are the responsibility of the Executive Branch agencies to keep up to date. The development effort would create the tagging of Iowa Administrative Code references to the Iowa Code. The new system would recognize changes in the Iowa Code and the resulting reference changes required. This would allow a citizen who was interested in a certain topic to see the relevant Iowa Code sections and the rules implementing the Code section in context with each other.

The creation of a uniform index for the Iowa Code and the Iowa Administrative Code and the development of enhanced electronic index capabilities. This would allow the following:

- Allow a user the ability to build collections across legal documents. An example could be a user interested in amphibians. In a single location that user could find all statutes and rules related to amphibians and build a single document that contained the related content.
- The creation of a uniform index would allow customized, subscription-based delivery of legal documents to be based upon uniform index entries. A person could subscribe to "Amphibians" and be notified of changes or proposed changes to the Iowa Code or the Iowa Administrative Code.

### **Recipients of this Service:**

Anyone who interacts with Iowa law.

### **Request (include dollar amount and description of what will be purchased – i.e. services, hardware, software)**

This request is for \$20,000 for services to complete the Scope Analysis. The LSA will request additional funding for the Design and Implementation phases in the future.

**Resources Being Contributed (people or funds being contributed to the project by the sponsoring agency- include role/% of time or amount in dollars):**

The LSA will be putting an emphasize on creating many tools that will create greater access to bills, amendments, the Iowa Code, and the Iowa Administrative Code. The additional tools include:

- Development of a customized subscription-based delivery of legal documents. This would allow the user to sign up for updates by RSS, email, etc. The user could subscribe by index subject, keyword, chapter, or committee. The subscription could be across the various products.
- Allowing developers access to the current legal documents through the creation of web services.
- Providing a tool for local delivery of collections with automatic updates. This may be a good delivery mechanism for people who do not have constant web connectivity (field workers).
- Allowing storage by individuals of annotations that are tied to pieces of content. This could be a repository for comments or notes on a specific Code section or a bill.

The development effort on the delivery of all of these tools for the public will require a large effort. We anticipate a significant cost in developer services. In addition, the use of LSA resources for the development effort will be significant.

Without the scope of effort defined it is unclear what the resource requirements are. A very rough projection could be a level of need of \$1 million with the LSA seeking funding for 1/3 of the cost.